

APPLICATION OF THE CONCEPT OF CRITICAL TOPONYMIES TO STREET NAME CHANGES IN BANDUNG, YOGYAKARTA, AND SURABAYA

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ABSTRACT

From 2017 to 2019, a number of street names were changed in Yogyakarta, Bandung and Surabaya City by each Provincial Government for the purpose of celebrating the reconciliation between the Sundanese (West Java) and the Javanese (Central Java, East Java, and Yogyakarta) after years of dispute due to the infamous Bubat Tragedy which occurred in the 14th century. Some existing street names in Yogyakarta and Surabaya were changed to those associated with Sundanese history, such as Jalan Padjadjaran and Jalan Siliwangi, while some existing street names in Bandung were changed to those associated with Javanese history, such as Jalan Majapahit and Jalan Hayam Wuruk. The author explores this phenomenon using the concept of critical toponymies and examines the connections between naming, place-making, and power underlying such policy. This study found that, although the changes were made with good intentions, in some cases this was actually opposed by several factions within the local community because those changes could obliterate the historical significance and collective memory represented by the previous names. From theoretical perspective, this paper also discussed the successful and unsuccessful changes of street names, as well as their relevance to the current context. In other words, our findings can be taken into consideration in future policy-making process.

KEYWORDS

Street renaming; conflict resolution; Javanese and Sundanese; critical toponymies.

ABSTRAK

Dari 2017 hingga 2019, telah dilakukan penggantian sejumlah nama jalan di Kota Yogyakarta, Bandung, dan Surabaya oleh pemerintah provinsi dengan tujuan untuk merayakan tuntasnya konflik yang timbul antara orang Sunda dan orang Jawa setelah peristiwa Perang Bubat pada abad ke-14. Sejumlah nama jalan di Yogyakarta dan Surabaya diubah menjadi Jalan Padjadjaran dan Jalan Siliwangi yang berciri Sunda, sedangkan nama sejumlah nama jalan di Bandung diubah menjadi Jalan Majapahit dan Jalan Hayam Wuruk yang berciri Jawa. Selanjutnya, penulis menganalisis fenomena itu menggunakan konsep *critical toponymies* (toponimi kritis) dan mengkaji hubungan antara ikhtiar penamaan (*naming*), penciptaan tempat (*place making*), dan unsur kuasa (*power*) yang melatarinya. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa, meskipun penggantian

nama itu dilakukan dengan itikad baik, pada sebagian kasus, kebijakan ini justru ditentang oleh sebagian masyarakat karena perubahan dapat menghilangkan nilai sejarah dan memori kolektif yang terkandung di dalamnya. Dari segi teoretis, makalah ini juga mendiskusikan keberhasilan dan ketidakberhasilan perubahan nama jalan serta kaitannya dengan konteks aktual sehingga dapat menjadi bahan pertimbangan di dalam proses pembuatan kebijakan di masa depan.

KATA KUNCI

Penggantian nama jalan; resolusi konflik; Jawa dan Sunda; toponimi kritis.

*I'll show you a place
High on the desert plain
Where the streets have no name
Where the Streets Have No Name (U2)*

1. INTRODUCTION

Philologist Berg (1927) discussed an ancient manuscript called *Kidung Sunda* ('Sundanese Song') that depicts a journey of the Sundanese royal family to Majapahit in around 1357 AD (14th century) to celebrate the wedding of a Sundanese princess with King Hayam Wuruk of Majapahit. Unfortunately, the journey ended with an incident between the two royal troops at Bubad Field. This incident is also known as *Tragedi Bubat* ('Bubat Tragedy') (see also van Zanten 1984). *Kidung Sunda* narrates the desire of King Hayam Wuruk of Majapahit to wed a princess with impeccable beauty. He heard that the daughter of the King of Sunda (located west of his kingdom) was the one that he had been looking for. Hence, a letter of marriage proposal was sent to Sunda. The proposal was warmly welcomed by the Sundanese King and his entire court. Then, the King, the Queen, the Princess, and a large royal entourage prepared for a long journey to Majapahit capital, which was located in the eastern side of Java Island. When the entourage arrived, a Majapahit envoy asked them to take a rest at a place called Pesanggarahan Bubad near the Bubad Field.

However, Gajah Mada, the Prime Minister of Majapahit, mistakenly interpreted this royal visit as an act of submission and their recognition of the superiority of Majapahit. Gajah Mada expressed this to the Sundanese envoy, which immediately provoked a resistance from the Sundanese. Not long after that, Gajah Mada's troops were sent to attack the Sundanese entourage, which resulted in the death of the Sundanese King and many male members of his entourage. Witnessing the calamity, the Sundanese Queen and her daughter, as well as their entire female entourage decided to commit *bela pati* or honorable suicide to protect their kingdom's dignity. Since then, the relationship between the two kingdoms had become strained (Iguchi 2015).

Although not all scholars recognize the validity of the Bubad Tragedy, it has influenced the actual relationship between the two ethnic groups and been disputed in various discussions. Sujatmiko (2014) mentioned that the Bubad Tragedy leads to centuries of symbolic feud and historical resentment, especially among the Sundanese. In addition, as described in his book entitled *Java Essay: The History and Culture of a Southern Country*, Iguchi (2015) uses this symbolic feud as a good example of stereotype and prejudice between two different people. He says that "the Sundanese will say that the Javanese were arrogant and cunning, while the Javanese will say that the Sundanese were arrogant and heartless." Moreover, Iguchi (2015) mentions the Bubad Tragedy as an unforgettable event for the Sundanese. There was even a suggestion that Sundanese women should not marry Javanese men, although marriages between a Sundanese and a

Javanese have become more common these days. As also mentioned in Moriyama (2005), there was also a practice in the past that members of Sundanese royal family and their relatives were prohibited from (or at least advised against) marrying their counterparts from Majapahit (Rosidi 2000). Tome Pires (1944), a Portuguese explorer who led an expedition throughout the Indonesian archipelago in the 16th century, also mentioned in his book entitled *Suma Oriental* ('the Eastern World') that there was some kind of bad blood between the Sundanese and the Javanese. Pires also described the Sundanese as more courageous than the Javanese. Moreover, he also said that the Sundanese were honest, while the Javanese were less credible.

In terms of preserving cultural symbolism in public space, especially through the naming of streets, the collective memory of the Bubat Tragedy has made it almost impossible to use Gajah Mada as a street name in West Java (Lanti, Ebih, and Dermawan 2019; Iguchi 2015; Sujatmiko 2014). On the contrary, Gajah Mada has excellent reputation in other parts of Java Island, and it has actually been used as the name of a reputable university in Yogyakarta (Universitas Gajah Mada). The question now is whether Sundanese names have similar reputation in Central or East Java. There are sufficient records which point out the absence of Prabu Siliwangi (the name of a Sundanese King) street in Central and East Java. All of this evidence seems to suggest that there may be some conflict between the Javanese and the Sundanese. If this is true, we then need to find out whether it is an explicit (open) or implicit (symbolic) conflict. Unfortunately, not much comprehensive research has been conducted on potential open conflict between the Javanese and the Sundanese, on the current state of relationships between those two ethnic groups, and on whether the Bubat Tragedy really has significant impacts on street-naming policy. If this hypothesis is true, a popular book entitled *Sejarah Kelam Jawa Sunda: Cinta, Perang, dan Rekonsiliasi* ('The Dark History of the Javanese and the Sundanese: Love, Tragedy, and Reconciliation') (Muhibbuddin 2018) may be able to provide a vivid description of the notorious incident: the alleged polemic, a discourse analysis on Bubat Tragedy, and a discussion about the renaming of geographical features as part of structural diplomacy. Therefore, this paper is prepared in order to contribute to the current body of literature on place-naming as a means of resolving age-old conflict due to the Bubat Tragedy.

1.1 Onomastics, Toponomastics, Odonomastics

In street naming, it is also necessary to also discuss the area around it. Both name and naming, whether the name of an individual or a place, have been studied in onomastics (Hough 2016; Lauder and Lauder 2015; Kridalaksana 2011; Anderson 2007; van Langendonck 2007). Initially, name is considered merely as a symbol to call an object. The function of a name is limited to only as a symbol used when referring to an object. Hough (2016) mentioned that ancient philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristoteles were interested in examining the relationship between name and its reference. Plato himself has written about name and its reference in *Cratylus*. A name serves as a unique identification tool that differentiates an object from another similar object. In other words, a name *per se* has no meaning (Mill 1973, in Smith 2016). Kripke (1980) adds to this conception by stating that a name can be interpreted in different ways although it may be intended to refer to the same object.

In his discussion about name and interpretation, Nyström (2016) states that, when somebody uses a name, it means that a set of processes have started within the person's mind that activates memory, fantasy, linguistic ability, emotion, and many more. This is contradictory to the idea that name is meaningless or only serves as a description. According to Nyström, a name is the result of a complex mental process, which is an imaging result of a series of voices and letters, and verbalization result of thoughts. Nyström proposes some

categories of name interpretation based on aspects such as denotative and connotative meanings, lexical meaning, and proprial meaning, as well as presuppositions that consist of categorial meaning and emotive meaning.

Toponymic study has been performed in various disciplines, including anthropology, cartography, geography, history, law, literature study, philosophy, political science, environmental psychology, and linguistics. Researchers in these fields perform toponymic study with the objective to understand the names of an individual and a place around us (Vuolteenaho and Berg 2009; van Langendonck 2007). Initially, linguistic and history scholars focused on name etymology tracing. Then, cultural geographic scholars (Rose-Redwood 2016; Rose-Redwood, Alderman, and Azaryahu 2010; Rose-Redwood 2009) and other socio-humanities scholars became interested in names because of their dynamic and symbolic contents. They are interested in the presence and usage of names within a community and in the psychological aspect that they contain (Ainiala and Halonen 2017; Ainiala 2016a, 2016b; Kostanski 2016b, 2016a; Collins 1987). In addition, names have also become cultural and political artifacts found in a particular geographical area (Erikha and Lauder n.d; Erikha, Susanti, and Yulianto 2018; Lauder and Lauder 2016; Lauder 2013). In this paper, I highlight the dynamics of names, especially street names (odonymy study) and their usage within a society. I also examine the socio-political social control in Indonesia in general and in Java and Sunda lands in particular.

1.2 Critical Toponymy and Place Name

The connection between geographical and political names can be found within geopolitical dynamics. At national level, DKI Jakarta government has suggested changing four street names which surround the National Monument: Jalan Medan Merdeka Utara into Jalan Ir. Soekarno (Indonesia's first president), Jalan Medan Merdeka Selatan into Jalan Muhamad Hatta (Indonesia's first vice-president), Jalan Medan Merdeka Barat into Jalan Ali Sadikin (Jakarta's famous governor), and Jalan Medan Merdeka Timur into Jalan Soeharto (Indonesia's second president) (The Jakarta Post 2013). However, this proposal was criticized by historian Asvi Marwan, mainly because he thinks that Soeharto's name is not appropriate as a street name (Regional Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia or *Dewan Perwakilan Daerah Republik Indonesia* 2013) or because this may eliminate the historical significance of the current name Medan Merdeka ('Field of Independence')¹.

During the Dutch colonial era, the four streets surrounding the vast square (the National Monument was later built right in the middle of the square) represented European-style spatial configuration. Thus, after Indonesia declared its independence, they were renamed Medan Merdeka Utara, Barat, Timur, and Selatan (literally: 'North, West, East, and South Field of Independence'). The square's name itself was changed from Koningsplein ('the King's Field') to Medan Merdeka ('Field of Independence'). This change was strategically made to proclaim Indonesia's independence and freedom from the Dutch to its own people and to the world (Macdonald 1995). Such effort to change street names is one of the main themes in critical toponymies, which is a field of study that focuses on the relationship between the change of a political regime and the symbolic transformation of infrastructure, place, and urban street names (Vuolteenaho and Berg 2009).

When discussing critical toponymies, it is important to note that this field is an offshoot of toponymies study which focuses on linguistic objects. This new branch also focuses on contestation process, spatial politics, and its connection to place naming. The main concept of critical toponymies revolves around the intersection of naming, place making, and power. These concepts exist and are understood differently in

¹ <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2013/09/21/1426553/Bersejarah.Nama.Jalan.Medan.Merdeka.Jangan.Seenaknya.Diganti?page=all>

various disciplines, but in critical toponymies, they are strategically used to examine the existing relationship between socio-political factors and place naming. This concept also covers how naming is also often done without any ideological intention, i.e. as “electrically semiotic dynamo” moved by a current regime to attach certain meaning to a place (Vuolteenaho and Berg 2009). Cases of relationship between power and socio-spatial configuration have been discussed and resulted in a set of theories (Puzey 2016; Simonsen 1996; Foucault 1980). Using these theories and concepts, the elements of place naming that seem to be contradictory can be brought closer so that we can further understand how name can function as a cultural artifact which can be constructed, strengthened, mediated, and even contested.

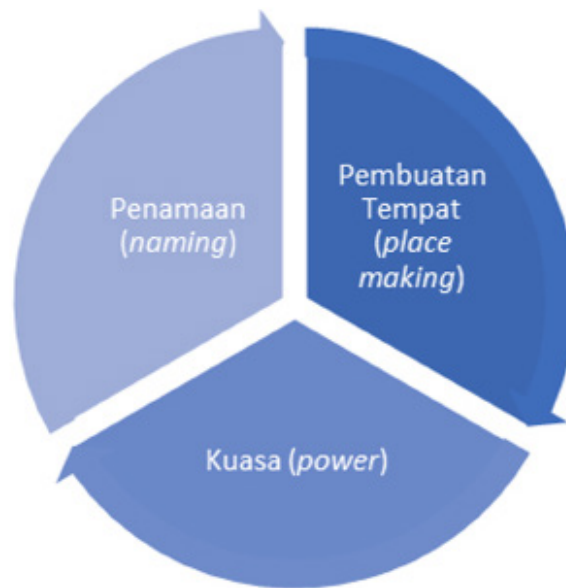


Figure 1. The Concept of Critical Toponymies.
(Adopted from Rose-Redwood, Alderman, and Azarhayu 2018; Berg and Vuolteenaho 2009).

City and state governments surely have considered urban street landscape as both infrastructural and political entity. Urban road facilities and infrastructure are present not only to facilitate the flow of people, goods, and capital, but also to instill the current regime’s ideology, to demonstrate political power, and to disseminate certain historical messages among the citizens. One of the ways that the government has always done to achieve these objectives for centuries is by giving names to urban streets. Usually, when a regime falls, the next regime will try to undo the attributes that marked the previous regime. This also occurs with some street names which are replaced to erase any association with the previous ruler in order to establish “new” social spaces under the new regime. However, Rose-Redwood, Alderman, and Azarhayu (2018) considered that, regardless of the powerful political machinations of a current regime in controlling symbolic significance of all infrastructure and streets, the footprints of the previous regime cannot be totally obliterated overnight, and this is reflected in public’s acceptance or rejection. Therefore, street naming contributes to the creation of urban street landscape as political cosmos. Simply put, urban streets are a collection of multiple visions of the past and the present, which may compete with each other in various different areas from time to time. To be precise, the intersection between different time spaces represented by urban streets is where the “political life” of a city is most clearly revealed.

2. STREET NAMES IN JAVANESE AND SUNDANESE LANDSCAPE

As mentioned before, the Bubat Tragedy is allegedly responsible for the absence of certain common street names in West Java and Central/East Java (Lanti, Ebih, and Dermawan 2019; Iguchi 2015; Sujatmiko 2014). Prabu Siliwangi (a Sundanese King) or Pajajaran (a Sundanese kingdom) are considered to be “taboo” street or place names in non-Sundanese areas of Java. Similarly, it is deemed impossible to find a street named Hayam Wuruk, Majapahit, or Gajah Mada in Sundanese lands. This issue had existed for centuries until three regional governments in Java Island (i.e. Yogyakarta Special Region, East Java, and West Java Provinces) decided to introduce street name-changing policies in order to resolve the symbolic feud that have occurred for more than six centuries (Muhibbuddin 2018). On 3 October 2017, Sultan Hamengku Buwono X (the hereditary leader of Yogyakarta) declared four new street names: Jalan Padjadjaran (formerly Jalan Ring Road Utara), Jalan Siliwangi (formerly Jalan Ring Road Barat), Jalan Majapahit (formerly Jalan Ring Road Timur), and Jalan Brawijaya (formerly Jalan Ring Road Selatan). On 11 May 2018 in Bandung, three new street names were also introduced: Jalan Majapahit (formerly Jalan Gasibu), Jalan Hayam Wuruk (formerly Jalan Cimandiri), and Jalan Citraresmi (formerly Jalan Pusdai). Finally, on 3 February 2019, Surabaya government introduced two new street names: Jalan Prabu Siliwangi (formerly Jalan Gunungsari) and Jalan Sunda (formerly Jalan Dinoyo). In comparison to the other two cities, Surabaya only changed two street names.

No	Province	Old Name	New Name
1	Yogyakarta Special Region	Jalan Ring Road Utara	Jalan Padjadjaran
2		Jalan Ring Road Barat	Jalan Siliwangi
3		Jalan Ring Road Timur	Jalan Majapahit
4		Jalan Ring Road Selatan	Jalan Brawijaya
5	West Java	Jalan Gasibu	Jalan Majapahit
6		Jalan Cimandiri	Jalan Hayam Wuruk
7		Jalan Pusdai	Jalan Citraresmi
8	East Java	Jalan Gunungsari	Jalan Prabu Siliwangi
9		Jalan Dinoyo	Jalan Sunda

Table 1. List of Old and New Street Names.

Although information about street name changes in Bandung, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya in relation to the Bubat Tragedy is relatively easy to find on online media, scientific studies of this topic are relatively scarce. There is, however, a thesis entitled *Persepsi Warga Tentang Perubahan Nama Jalan Dinoyo dan Jalan Gunungsari Surabaya* (‘People’s Perception of the Name Change of Jalan Dinoyo and Jalan Gunungsari, Surabaya’) by Alif Zulkifli Ramadhan (2019). However, his thesis focuses on the level of government and other stakeholders which plays a significant role in street name changes in Surabaya, and it contains limited analysis of common people’s opinion on the change.

Were the regional governments able to change street names in Bandung, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya smoothly? A comprehensive study is needed to answer this question. To start with, there were a number of complaints made against the proposal. For example, there was a demonstration in which the protesters brandished some posters which read “Say no to the plan to change the names of Jalan Dinoyo and Gunung Sari because it is a betrayal of the struggles of Surabayan heroes!!” and “Elimination of historical names is the same as betraying the whole nation!!” (Jatim Now 2019).

This protest refers to a historical fact that Gunungsari was the name of the last defense hill for a group of independence fighters called “Front Bukit Gunung Sari” during the war against the Allied Force in 1945. Therefore, Surabaya People’s Awareness Movement (*Gerakan Peduli Rakyat Surabaya* or GRPS) considers that any change in the street’s name undermines Surabayan youths’ contribution to Indonesia’s independence.

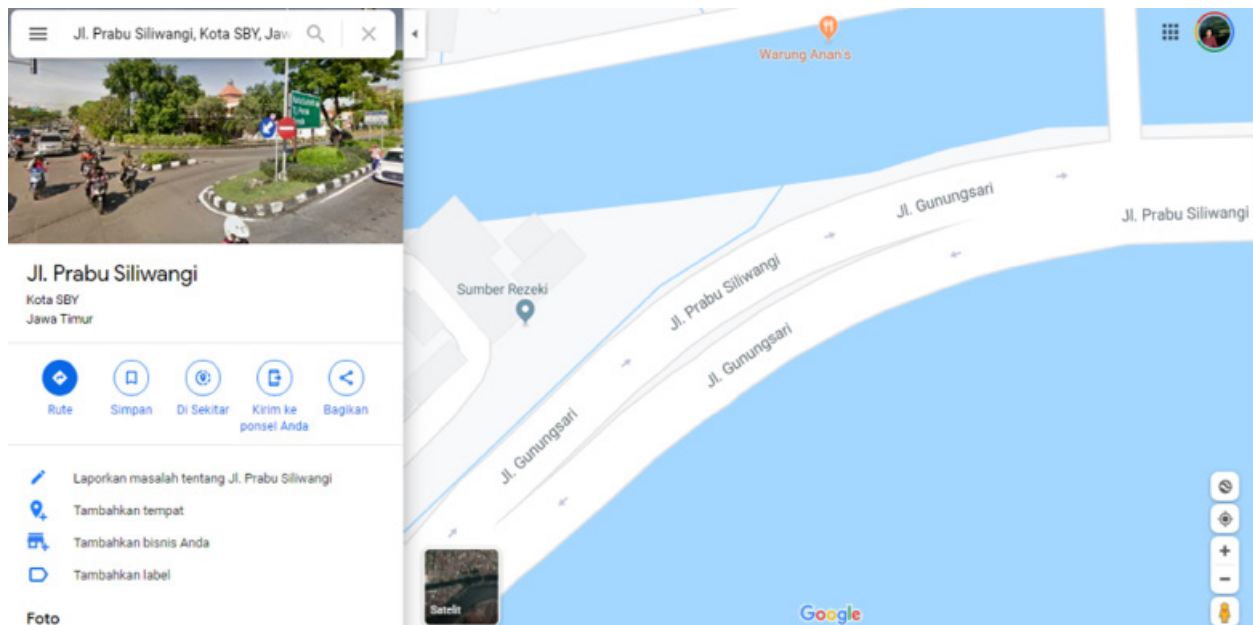


Figure 2. The Names “Jalan Prabu Siliwangi” and “Jalan Gunungsari” are Shown Simultaneously on Google Maps (accessed on 20 December 2019).

Another opposition was also displayed on Jalan Dinoyo in Surabaya, a part of which had been renamed Jalan Sunda. This street is part of the long road built by William Daendels, a Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies, as a postal road in early 19th century and once also served as a tram line. Surabayan historical observers, some Surabayan Regional People’s Representative Council members, and members of Indonesian Army and Police Officers’ Children Young Generation Communication Forum (*Generasi Muda Forum Komunikasi Putra Putri Purnawirawan TNI Polri Indonesia* or GM FKPPPI) rejected the government’s plan because the old name contains an important historical meaning. Thus, such changes may undermine of original historical value of the place.

From the above responses, we can observe that changes in street names may become a political event. It revolves around a linguistic object on a city landscape as a form of marking system. To promote peace between two dominant ethnic groups in Java Island, the government exercised its power by initiating symbolic programs such as street name changes. In onomastics, such names are known as commemorative names. Commemorative names often incorporate the name of an object, a person, a place, or an event within them. From this perspective, street names are often more than merely passive artifacts. They might represent a claim on an urban space, both factually and symbolically. In addition, street names are also an element of social space which demonstrates an effort to legitimize and/or delegitimize an identity or a specific worldview (Rose-Redwood, Elderman, and Azaryahu 2018).



Figure 3. Local Citizens Are Protesting Government's Plan to Rename Jalan Dinoyo in Surabaya.
(Source: www.detik.com, accessed on 9 September 2019).



Figure 4. Surabayans Are Protesting Government's Plan to Rename Two Streets.
(Source: www.kompas.com, accessed on 14 September 2019)

Local citizens expressed opposition to the government's plan to rename streets because it can remove the cultural and historical values embedded within the old names. Kostanski (2016a) points out four recommendations for the authority which has a plan to rename place names (including street names): (1) the change must be based on a consensus among all relevant and concerned parties; (2) the change must not create controversy, which may lead to protests from the local people; (3) the old and the new names will be used together temporarily before gradually moving to a single name; and (4) the plan must be frequently disseminated among the public using various media outlets.

Kostanski's recommendations above have actually been carried out by the regional governments of Bandung, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya, and this did not create any controversy at first. In his research, Kostanski (2016a) found that the Australian government deliberately created a controversy by changing a National Park's name (from Gariwerd into Grampians) without disseminating the plan beforehand. The purpose was to attract public attention to boost the number of total visitors to the place. In relation to the need to achieve an agreement between all parties on street renaming, especially in the case of rejection by the Surabaya People's Awareness Movement (*Gerakan Peduli Rakyat Surabaya*) and FKPP, the government needs to use soft diplomacy when dealing with various local communities.

Despite the dual name proposal, all three provincial governments prefer to immediately change the old names into new ones. Only Surabayans openly protested the plan for street name change, while the regional governments of Bandung and Yogyakarta faced no rejection, as far as reported on online media outlets. It is important to note that the initiator of this socio-cultural reconciliation is the Sultan of Yogyakarta himself, Sri Sultan Hamengku Buwono X, who had in fact introduced the dual-naming system in 2013 and 2017 before eventually fully adopting the new name (Erikha and Lauder n.d.; Erikha 2018). Moreover, the dual-naming system also appears on Google Maps. If one reflects on the success story of the provincial government of Yogyakarta in changing the street names in 2013, the protests in Surabaya may not have happened if the provincial government applied the double-naming system as a form of "transition" from the old to the new.

Such street renaming plans are typically proposed with good intentions, according to the governments' statement, and carried out within a particular context., whatever it may have been. Regardless of the good motive, such effort may not always be welcomed by all of the local people. Erikha (2017) argues that street renaming can be rejected due to strong "toponymic attachment". Toponymic attachment is a positive and/or negative image associated with a real or imaginary toponym held by an individual or a group of people (Kostanski 2016b). To start with, name change may pose a cognitive burden to street users who have been accustomed to the old name. As the local community becomes more familiar with the old name, any sudden effort to change it will not be deemed necessary, as far as the locals are concerned, and this attitude makes it more difficult for the locals to adapt themselves to the new name.

2.1 Naming and city as texts

As mentioned above, the general emphasis on street naming textuality fits the expanding interest on landscape symbolism, representation, and further intersection with social and humanity sciences. When a landscape needs to be understood as a "text", as mentioned by cultural geography expert and other scholars, street naming can be considered as a classic example of how a city is produced as a text. From the semiotic perspective, every marking of geographical feature (in this case, street names) is useful to represent special reference (street overlay) to signification system (city as a text). City as a text or "city-text", is seen as a spatial orientation system. In this system, every street name obtains its meaning, both intertextually and relationally. However, much research has shown that street naming is not only about assisting people in finding a specific location, but also about embedding a particular socio-historical narrative into people's daily life. This is more or less in line with Landry and Bourhis' explanation (1997) that a text on a physical signboard serves more than just a tool for showing directions, but also as a tool to convey symbolic meanings. Landry and Bourhis points out that place names represents the linguistic identity of a local group by means of a text which refers to a particular landscape feature. As Spolsky (2008) said, regardless of the informative contents of a street signboard, the words have been carefully chosen to reflect the symbolic values upheld by a part or all members of a linguistic society living in a particular area. There is a study by Erikha (2018) which uses

the concept of linguistic landscape (LL) on street renaming in Yogyakarta which reflected strong Javanese cultural background. This street renaming was implemented because Keraton Yogyakarta (the Yogyakarta Palace) wished to restrengthen the philosophy of *Sangkan Paraning Dumadi* represented by the four main roads which stretch southwards from the Tugu monument to Alun-alun Lor (the Palace's Northern Square), starting from Jalan Margo Utomo, Jalan Margo Mulyo, Jalan Malioboro, and Jalan Pangurakan.



Figure 5. Jalan Majapahit in Sunda Landscape. (Source: www.yourbandung.com).

With regard to Jalan Majapahit in Bandung City, the street name on the signboard mainly serves an informative function to any street users or visitors. This is practical, but the name also serves a symbolic function because it carries the name of a great ancient kingdom in Java, which allegedly had a conflict with Pajajaran Kingdom. Thus, this can also be interpreted as an implicit effort to restore the friendship between the Javanese and the Sundanese. At the same time, this action also broke the age-old “taboo” of giving any names associated with Majapahit Kingdom to a place in West Java, including the name of the kingdom itself (Majapahit), the king’s name (Hayam Wuruk), or the prime minister’s name (Gajah Mada) (Muhibbuddin 2018). As an additional piece of information, in an interview with *Suara Karya* (a local newspaper), the Governor of West Java, Ahmad Heryawan, shared his opinion on this reconciliation effort (Asianto 2018):

The Pasundan Bubat incident is part of our history. It is an empirical fact that cannot be removed from the history of our nation. Pasundan Bubat should not be forgotten, but it must be forgiven. Let’s overcome historical grudges, make peace with history, and take it as a lesson so that such incident will never happen again in the future.

Even though Governor Ahmad Heryawan’s statement above is open for debate, changing the names of several public places was a good effort to commemorate the event in a peaceful way. According to Hootit and Kelly (2012), language can be used as a tool to create peace in a conflict zone through an ethnolinguistic based policy by using three different languages for various public places in Serbia Herzegovina, a resolution which was mediated by NATO. In addition, street names must also be understood as a complex marking system which refers to not only an objective situation around the street, but also historical figures or events.

Subsequently, by using the names, the people are also entering a symbolic “room” that stores the collective memory about a significant event, initiated by a political regime through text in social space.

Augustins (2004) elaborates that the name of a street should express something that is considered important and deserves to be commemorated for eternity. Like monuments and other memorial buildings, street names also commemorates what the authorities consider as worthy to be remembered by the people and thus used in the semiotic construction of urban memory in city landscape. Commemorated names usually require reproduction of ethos and ideology that support the social-political order of the current authorities through place naming. Although historical narrative is embodied in urban space through street naming, the spatial configuration of a city as a text is something synchronic instead of diachronic. This is due to the footprints of naming practices in many historical eras by various political regimes that often mix in the political cosmos within the urban street landscape. Thus, the city text contains the element of commemoration, especially that of Javanese-Sundanese reconciliation which, according to Muhibbuddin (2018), has been integrated into the local cultural and social structure. Examples of this include intercultural marriages between a Javanese and a Sundanese; modification of educational materials by including a comprehensive explanation of the Bubat incident in school textbooks; and proliferation of trade activities between Sundanese and Javanese people. Furthermore, the street renaming is also categorized as structural reconciliation because it involves the government and uses top-to-bottom approach, as evidenced in the Governor’s Decree.

2.2 City streets as the arena for cultural and social justice

City landscape is not just an empty space with an all-powerful regime at the top which dictates the people’s ideology. It is also a “cultural arena” where many social groups are competing in an effort to assert their own history and identity that needs to either be acknowledged or dismissed through texts throughout the city landscape (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010). Viewing streets as a cultural arena will assist us in understanding the ongoing socio-political processes and the conflicts that underlie toponym production and consumption in an urban setting. This approach will also help us reveal the people with (or without) power to determine toponyms, the people who have the right or authority over the city, and the people who can offer a vision or has certain claims related to the city’s past, present, and future (Dwyer and Alderman 2008). Therefore, street naming is not only a product of social power, but also an effective channel to accumulate power, which is the same as creating political authority through media in order to offer certain ideologies to the general public and make them look like a “natural order”. However, such process has never occurred totally smoothly, and, in some cases, street naming with political motives can become an intense political struggle or a controversial subject (Kostanski 2016a).

Street renaming to mark the reconciliation between the Javanese and the Sundanese has practically become a cultural arena, place, or stage for the authorities to assert their power through the installation of direction or street signboards. We may not see any upheaval in Bandung and Yogyakarta, but opposition actually happened in Surabaya. This rejection kept being voiced until the inauguration day of the new street names which replaced Jalan Diyono and Jalan Gunungsari—it is important to note that the change did not apply to the entire streets (Utomo 2019). A similar phenomenon also occurred in Jakarta. In early 2018, the government planned to change Jalan Mampang Prapatan and Jalan Warung Buncit into Jalan A. H. Nasution. The plan has been disseminated by the South Jakarta city government, but opposition was raised by Komunitas Betawi Kita (a community of Betawi people) and historians. The reason was that such renaming can erode the streets’ historical and cultural meaning among Betawi people. Shortly after that, the plan was suspended by DKI Jakarta Governor, Anies Baswedan (Erikha et al. 2018). In Surabaya case, there

were several groups of local people, socio-cultural entities, members of regional parliament, and even the extended family of army officers felt that they were not treated fairly and were ignored by the provincial or regional government as the renaming was done unilaterally. Such resentment seems to contradict the initial objective of the plan, i.e. conflict resolution. The renaming has actually garnered protests from a number of community groups.

Street renaming is a long and careful process, starting from name selection to considerations regarding the socio-political impact on the community, place, and the entire landscape. The name and its meaning will become an integral part of local cultural system that determines the way people see, understand, and explore the world around them. Simply put, naming a place also means introducing a new worldview by prioritizing specific actions and/or socio-spatial action, and this may include some degree of violence, expropriation, and even excommunication against those who oppose the policy. New labels carry different meanings, and this may spark controversy and narrative fights that occur within the society. This often results in a prolonged debate about who and what needs to be remembered (or forgotten) in relation to the place in question.

In the state of Victoria, Australia, topography and street naming has been clearly regulated and specified in *Naming rules for places in Victoria* (The State of Victoria Department of Environment 2016). Of the 12 basic principles contained therein, three are in line to those mentioned in this paper, i.e. that the new names should take account of the public's desire, that the new name should be related to the place's setting, and that a double-naming system should be applied first. The local community must be involved because they have both direct and indirect contacts with the place and are immediately affected by those places. Moreover, the effect may be long-lasting and be felt by future generations. In Surabaya case, there was some concern that the street renaming may obliterate the historical values embedded in those names. In addition, as suggested by Kostanski in his discussion about double naming, the abovementioned regulation in Victoria also mentions the same thing.

2.3 City as a text: a performative room in daily lives

Initially, critical toponymies emerged as a branch of social science and humanities. Many scholars working on the politics of street naming have formulated a concept of urban street landscape which contains textual and representational terminology. Indeed, when we either adopt a semiotic approach or see a landscape as a cultural area, street naming is usually understood as a form of "representation" having double meanings. On the one side, urban place names are generally seen as a sign that linguistically represent what is being signified; on the other hand, the installation of street signboards is considered as a significant political move to represent various social groups in a particular urban space. In other words, whatever type of analysis is being carried out, most scholars adopt a more critical approach, especially those who are working on the issue of street naming. These scholars have continuously framed this issue with a representationalism mode of thinking.

As an epistemological and ontological concept, representationalism is based on the belief that the main objective of language is to describe the world. According to this view, language is representational, and representation is linguistic. Whatever the case is, equality between language and representation has a long history and strongly embedded in the modern science thinking and humanities studies (Rose-Redwood, Reuben, and Glass 2014). Furthermore, some of us may see names as merely labels considered as having originated from entities already existed in the world (positivism), while some others may understand naming as a reflection or representation of social power (social critical theory). Both approaches remain tied to representationalist's chain of thought. The issue with this way of thinking is the fact that language serves more

functions than only a representational one, and representation can take many different of forms beyond a linguistic or textual medium. This is important for critical toponymies experts as this perspective enables them to study place naming as something that is beyond representational practices. In other words, understanding the link between language and representation is very important to view any critical description of an urban street as a “performative space” in everyday life.

Disputes over place naming in general and street names in particular are the impact generated by the government’s attempt to adopt certain spatial practices. J. L. Austin’s classic work entitled *How to Do Things with Words?* (1962) mentions that a speech act is able not only to describe or represent an object or event that has already existed, but also to perform a concrete action. This is because *stating* something is equal to doing something (Austin 1962). For Austin, a speech act can be considered as a performative effort, i.e. that it is said as a “suitable state” by the right speaker, according to a set of stipulated rules.

As a linguistic feature, toponyms are also a representation of a particular place. In other words, toponyms are language symbols of a real social place and space. According to Austin’s perspective, naming of things can serve as a way to legitimize or standardize a suggestion, an ideology, a direction, or a superordinate symbol. In the case of street renaming in Java (especially in Yogyakarta and Surabaya), we can see that the governors, using the political power bestowed on them, would like to apologize for the mistakes that their ancestors have made centuries ago. Thus, in this case, the name change policy functions as a communication tool, albeit implicit (see Anderson 2007), and can be interpreted as an expression of guilt and desire to reestablish the relationship between those two ethnic groups that once had worsened after the Bubad Tragedy. West Java Governor Ahmad Heriawan also issued a similar policy, i.e. using names related to Majapahit Kingdom in Sunda landscape. as a gesture of goodwill to rebuild the relationship between those two ethnic groups.

3. CONCLUSION

Street renaming introduced by the provincial governments of West Java, Yogyakarta, and East Java was a reconciliation effort to end a centuries-old conflict, which is particularly relevant to Indonesia’s situation as a multicultural country. Cultural diplomacy by means of toponymies in Indonesia might have been considered rare in the past. It can be argued that what the three provincial governments did was something new, at least in the current context of Indonesia. The street renaming in those areas generally shows a top-down pattern, although it is usually preceded by an internal study that involves experts. It is important to note that the name change policy received no opposition in Yogyakarta and Bandung, but it happened in Surabaya. This lead to the question of whether this reconciliatory effort can be considered successful or only partially successful. This is confirmed by the fact that there were opposition groups from the local community, especially those who are connected in some way to the original names. In other words, in Surabaya case, the reconciliatory effort actually created a new conflict that required mediation. Such rejection has somehow marred the conflict resolution effort initiated by the three provincial governments. This condition even has the potential for creating new conflicts, which may have an impact on the existing relationship between the two ethnic groups in the future.

Therefore, critical toponymies highlights the importance of considering the power relation in both place naming and place making. Giraut and Houssay-Holzschuch (2016) call toponymies *dispotif* and propose that naming is a process that involves geopolitical elements, including the actors involved, the entire community, and technology. This describes the importance of local community’s direct involvement prior to renaming (see Erikha 2018; Kostanski 2016; Victoria 2016). Name as a symbol can also be interpreted as

a reflection of existing political situation (Spolsky 2008). Political situation is dynamic, i.e. it may change at any time. The change may or may not be beneficial to the existing community. Name changing that politically disadvantages—if not detrimental to—a community group will surely lead to resistance and resentment towards the new name. As an anticipation measure, the government needs to invite them to a discussion and hear their aspirations as well as other alternatives which can be agreed upon by all parties. Based on such discussion, the government which holds the authority to rename places must carefully consider the community's aspirations, especially arguments which are related to that place's long history. The practical implication of this is that place names must be selected and planned in detail, especially street renaming. Therefore, a study conducted by applying the concept of critical toponymies can produce an output in the form of a policy paper.

In relation to the government's policy, actually there is Law Number 24 of 2009 that specifies the compulsory usage of Indonesian language when naming a building or property, settlements, and streets, except local or foreign names which have a very strong and unique connection to the place's history. The government has recently issued Presidential Regulation Number 63 on the Usage of Indonesian Language, which explains Law No. 24 of 2009 in more detail, including provisions concerning street naming. However, learning from the protests in Surabaya, I strongly encourage the promulgation of a regulation at provincial government level—with some adjustment to the local context—that provides a detailed discussion about how naming and name replacement are to be carried out, taking the Victoria naming policy in Australia as a case example (the State of Victoria Department of Environment 2016).

A policy paper may be produced based on a study of various street renaming efforts in the past. The socio-onomastic approach (which is based on sociolinguistics) can also be used to observe people's perception and behavior with regard to street renaming. This can be a model on how street name can be a tool for cultural diplomacy and as a "peacemaker" among various cultural groups in Indonesia. On a larger scale, it can also be adopted to solve international conflicts, such as the one caused by the renaming of South China Sea into North Natuna Sea (*Laut Natuna Utara*) by the Indonesian government that sparked resistance from the Chinese government (see Lauder and Lauder 2018) or other toponymic dispute over Sea of Korea, East Sea, and Sea of Japan that involve South Korea, North Korea, and Japan in the dispute (see Lee 2018).

As mentioned above, critical toponymies is a critical investigation into place-naming process based on the power relation that underlies it. In brief, this study considers three key points in order to see the political dynamics of street naming, namely viewing an urban street as (1) an urban text, (2) a cultural arena, and (3) a performative space. Each perspective offers different ways to interpret the political significance of an urban street (Red-Rosewood, Alderman, and Azaryahu 2018). The government's effort to rename several streets in Yogyakarta, Bandung, and Surabaya may be considered successful in several areas only, while the Surabaya case requires further evaluation. This paper highlights the fact that the street renaming's initial objective was to settle the age-old conflict due to the Bubat Tragedy, but, rather ironically, it triggered a dispute in certain areas. By observing this socio-cultural phenomenon, we found how naming may become a very significant issue in an effort to maintain harmony between various groups of people instead of causing dispute. The topic still requires an in-depth analysis and exploration in various areas, such as the main factor behind the local resistance; the factors which have contributed to the success of the renaming policy in other regions; the way a place name can serve as a reconciliatory tool or "peacemaker"; the policy's effectiveness so far; and ways to promote such efforts to build harmony amongst various cultures in Indonesia. These questions must be answered in order that a renaming plan can be carried out smoothly without triggering any conflict or resistance.

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